

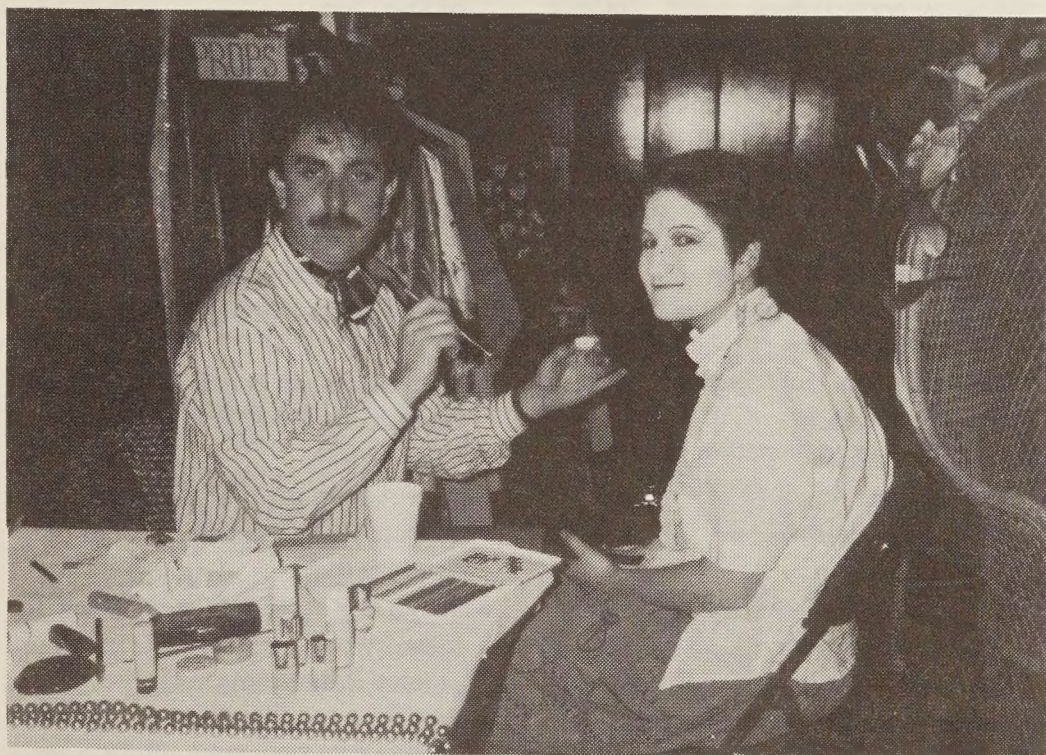
## Retiring At Last!

Ah, retirement. My years of creative association with the *Forward* ends with this issue. Since 1982, when Paul Cohen called to ask if I could come to a meeting of the newsletter committee and "help out," my association with Sha'ar Zahav has been based on a view from the newsletter. Not that there haven't been other committees, other involvements, but the newsletter has always been foremost.

During that time, I've seen the editorial/production part of the committee grow from two to three people, down to one (me) and now back to a much healthier number. I've also seen the *Forward* become increasingly professional and increasingly appreciated by an ever widening audience. The tasks involved in producing the newsletter have changed over the years as we became more sophisticated (and as we realized that we couldn't do it *all* by ourselves), but the satisfaction gained from each issue and the pride in how the *Forward* aided CSZ's mission has never lessened.

Carrying on at "newsletter central" will be Peter Vishniac, with Alita Rosenfeld co-chairing. Howard Blechman, Bob Goldware, Stephanie Hannaford, Garry Koenigsberg and Amy Blasenheim all contribute to the process. Another couple of members are "trying us out" for a month or so to see if it clicks. A separate committee handles distribution.

I leave the *Forward* with a sense of accomplishment and regrets (I will miss  
(Continued on page 3)



## Painting Purim Punims

*This year's Purim party, a Bissel Bazaar, featured impromptu casting, with rotating casts for each scene of the Megillah. Instant makeup (by Nathan Robinson) and costumes yielded Esthers, Hamens and a parade of virgins unlike any previously seen at Sha'ar Zahav. Our thanks to Steve Elman and his hard-working committee for a wonderful production.*

## Women's Havurah

### Theater Party

Members of the Women's Havurah and their women friends will gather at Theatre Rhinoceros, 2926 16th St., San Francisco, on Sunday, April 10 for "Going to Seed," a comedy dealing with the youngest woman in a three-generational black family coming to terms with her lesbianism.

The performance will be preceded at 6:30 pm by a reception and get-together with refreshments, at the theater. The play begins at 8 pm.

Don't miss this special event, coordinated by Ann Biderman and Sylvia Weisenberg. Please call the synagogue office regarding ticket availability and prices.

## Candidates Slate

The Election Committee spent the month of February recruiting and finalizing the list of candidates for the upcoming elections to be held at the May 15 congregational meeting. Candidates' statements are currently being prepared and reviewed for inclusion in a mailing to all members in mid-April. The candidates for office are:

**President: Robin Leonard**

**Vice President: Eric Keitel**

**Treasurer: Ben Schalit**

**Recorder: Alex Ingersoll**

There are five positions to be filled on the Va'ad this year; four two-year terms, and also a one-year term to fill out the position being vacated by presidential

(Continued on page 3)

## UAHC Happening

The UAHC National Committee on AIDS will be visiting Congregation Sha'ar Zahav and Temple Emanu-El between April 29 and May 3. Members of the committee will be invited to attend Friday night services on April 29.



## Contributions

Sha'ar Zahav welcomes all contributions, of all sizes, to mark any event, and to any of our funds. Contributions will be acknowledged in the *Forward* unless requested otherwise.

Donations were made to Sha'ar Zahav's funds in the past months by the following contributors:

### *General Fund*

Mimi Epstein  
Beatrice Bettinger  
In memory of Cheryl Orvis  
Walter Grenn  
Jerome Goldstein  
Michael Zimmerman  
Laurie Radovsky  
Walt Leiss  
Stephen Walters  
Tal'or Barshank  
Don Albert  
Mark Mendelow  
Ann Biderman  
Rob Tat  
Shirley Liberman  
David Stein & Alex Ingersoll, in memory of Yetta & Benjamin Shuchat  
Eric Keitel & Aaron Cooper, in memory of Gary Starliper & in memory of Bob Gutterman's mother, Winifred  
Judy Macks, in memory of Gary Starliper  
Peter Vishniac  
Keith Barton, in memory of Cheryl Orvis & in memory of Gary Starliper  
Wendy Rouser, in honor of ARC/AIDS Theater

### *AIDS Fund*

Michael Zimmerman  
Cheryl Price & Shelley Montgomery, in honor of the birth of Jacob Ross Shikora Montgomery  
In memory of Gary Starliper  
Sam Tucker & Mark Connell  
Sharyn Saslafsky & Catherine Dodd  
Wayne & Mary Starliper  
Marge & Steve Cooper  
Bruce Katz  
Dennis Bates, best wishes for a Happy Purim

Jon Funk, in honor of John Arnold's birthday & in memory of Gary Starliper  
Michael Erceg, in honor of the work in progress by the Caring Committee, chaired by Sen Talley  
Howard Blechman, in loving memory of Ron Gertz  
Susan Horst, in honor of Jim Campbell, because Collette had such a happy nine lives  
Allen Berenstein, in memory of Bob Gutterman's mother, Winifred

### *Social Action Fund*

Bruce Katz, in memory of Cheryl Orvis  
Harlan Shays, on behalf of Congregation Ahavat Shalom, in memory of Cheryl Orvis  
Jeanne Adelman, in memory of Barbara Rosenblum & in honor of Sandy Butler  
Marilyn O'Keeffe & Nancy Meyer, in memory of Cheryl Orvis & in honor of Jerry Rosenstein

### *Rabbi's Discretionary Fund*

In memory of Cheryl Orvis  
Gordon Osser  
Leila Raim & Catherine Wisniewski  
Seth Charney  
Allan Berenstein, in memory of Cheryl Orvis & in honor of Mike Rankin's birthday  
Sam Thal, in honor of Mike Rankin's birthday  
Michael Erceg, in appreciation of Rabbi Kahn  
Rick Crane, in memory of Gary Starliper  
Sharyn Saslafsky, in memory of Cheryl Orvis—friend, gentle soul, may you rest in peace.  
Sandra Butler, in memory of Barbara Rosenblum

### *Building Fund*

In memory of Cheryl Orvis  
Ellen Kugler  
David Stein & Alex Ingersoll  
Richard Inlander  
Michael Erceg

Jerry Rosenstein, in memory of Gary Starliper & in memory of Bob Gutterman's mother  
Zelda & Oscar Blechman, on the occasion of their son Stephen's marriage

### *Education Fund*

Sen Talley, in honor of George Lucas & Tom Rothgiesser's anniversary, in honor of Mike Rankin's retirement, in honor of David Gass' birthday, in honor of Alex Ingersoll's birthday, in honor of Howard Blechman's birthday, in honor of Neil Hart's birthday, in appreciation of Susan Colson & in memory of Cheryl Orvis.  
Cheryl Price & Shelley Montgomery, in honor of the birth of Jacob Ross Shikora Montgomery  
Sharyn Saslafsky & Catherine Dodd, in memory of Bob Gutterman's mother, Winifred

### *Prayerbook Fund*

Dana Vinicoff, in memory of Cheryl Orvis  
Lawrence Millner, in memory of his parents Sadye & Joseph Millner

### *Torah Fund*

Richard Inlander, in honor of Adam's admission to UC Davis  
Alex Ingersoll & David Stein, in memory of Winifred Gutterman  
Marilyn Hertzberg, in memory of Cheryl Orvis

### *Library Fund*

Allan Berenstein, in honor of Isabelle Fishman  
Alex Ingersoll, in appreciation of Eli Weinstein's continual good work  
Jacqueline Letalien, in memory of Cheryl Orvis' self-stated mission: "to get people to say *va'ad* correctly"

Our congregation is honored to receive a copy of the new *Torah Commentary* for use on the bimah. The *Commentary* has been donated in memory of Bobby Mackey.



## Book Drive & Israel Fair

In a joint venture with Congregation Ahavat Shalom, CSZ will host a very special event on Sunday, May 1. The Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Book Drive and Israel Fair will be the culmination of lengthy planning by the Social Action Committees of both synagogues to find a way to support our gay brothers and sisters in Israel.

Through contacts made by our own Ron Lezell, Ahavat Shalom's Danny Kent and others, we have been learning about the difficulties of gay and lesbian life in Israel. Among other problems, there is a special need for materials on lesbian, gay and bisexual themes. The Agudah, a primarily gay male organization in Tel Aviv, and the Feminist Movement, a predominantly lesbian group, are trying to build libraries and desperately hunger for the kinds of books and recordings which are so easily accessible to us here.

In order to help meet this need, the two congregations are asking people to bring with them to this fun event at least one book, record or tape with a gay/lesbian/bisexual theme. All items collected at the book drive will be delivered to these groups' libraries as a sign of our solidarity with them and our commitment to the ideals we share.

But the excitement of this event doesn't stop there. This is, coincidentally, the 40th anniversary of Israel's birth and Yom Ha'atzma'ut (Independence Day)—so those attending will be treated to slide shows and presentations on gay/lesbian life in Israel, as well as a discussion of progressive movements for peaceful coexistence in the Middle East. During these difficult times, the controversy over recent events in Israel and the occupied territories and the intense feelings about them within our community, promise to make this a lively and important discourse.

On the lighter side, there will be refreshments and some good old-fashioned Israeli fold dancing led by Nicole Berner. This will be a great opportunity for mingling, sharing and playing together among the members of our two sister congregations.

The Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Book Drive and Israel Fair will take place at the Women's Building at 3543 18th Street, from 4 to 7 pm on Sunday, May 1. Call 861-6932 for details. The Social

Action Committee hopes that many of our members will come out and enjoy themselves and help our gay and lesbian Israeli brothers and sisters, too.

—Jonathan Mesinger

## Elections

(Continued from page 1)

candidate Robin Leonard. The contest for these positions promises to be a lively one this year, with nine candidates vying for election. Be sure to attend Candidates' Night after services on Friday, April 29 to hear the candidates in person. They are:

Don Albert  
Allan Berenstein  
Jose Luis Moscovich  
Steve Greenberg  
Bill Schlichter  
Jonathan Schwartz  
Sen Talley  
Bill Goldstein  
Dana Vinicoff

Persons who submitted written requests to be petition candidates by Monday, March 28 will also be included on the ballot and in the mailing. The mailing will include instructions for requesting and submitting absentee ballots for members unable to attend the May 15 meeting.

—Nancy Snow,  
Election Committee

## Retirement

(Continued from page 1)

all the close working meetings with the committee, in fact), but I've decided that it's time for me to retire, to let others carry on and develop the *Forward* in new directions, while I explore other areas in which I can make contributions to Sha'ar Zahav.

I do hope that others may be inspired to look into the newsletter, to give Peter or Alita or one of the other members a call, to see if you, too, might find a comfortable spot working with the *Forward*.

—Alex Ingersoll

## Rabbi Janet Marder to Speak

Rabbi Janet Ross Marder, rabbi of our sibling congregation Beth Chayim Chadashim in Los Angeles, will speak at Shabbat services on Friday, April 29. Rabbi Marder is an engaging and challenging—as well as very funny—speaker. Many people recall with delight her wonderful sermon at the Western Regional Conference at Camp Swig two years ago.

On Saturday, April 30, Rabbi Marder will speak at our first "Torah luncheon." Following Saturday morning services, there will be a potluck lunch and an opportunity to study Torah with an outstanding teacher. Rabbi Marder's shi'ur (class) will be entitled "Love and Death in the search for God: a Reading of Two Psalms."

For more information, please call the synagogue office.

## Living with AIDS

While the mass media limit their reports about the AIDS crisis to "AIDS victims" and "people dying," we often rely upon interactions with all the people who are living with AIDS for our renewal. Rabbi Kahn has invited several members of the congregation to speak at Shabbat services on Friday evening, April 15, about their own spirituality and how they are living with AIDS. This is an opportunity to express our communal support and to listen. These lives of struggle and faith, courage and simple coping will, hopefully, be sources of inspiration for us all.

## Family/Children's Havurah Passover Program

The Family/Children's Havurah will have a Passover program and mini-Seder on Saturday, April 9 at 4 pm at the synagogue. Each participant will have an opportunity to prepare something for the Seder table—Passover foods, a Seder plate or a song. Rabbi Kahn will lead the mini-Seder which will be followed by a festive, pot-luck meal.

Call the synagogue office, or Mark Weisman or Carol Hoffman at 658-1684 (evenings) for more information.



## Matzah Meshugas

Passover is a political holiday and it has inspired political liberation movements ever since—including our generation's liberation theology. This festival is called *Z'man cheiruteiny*—the Season of our Liberation. Our rabbis taught that Passover and its symbols speak not only of political liberation but also of spiritual liberation. The Mishnah teaches that the telling of the Exodus "begins with degradation and concludes with glory." The rabbis debated where to begin the story. Does it begin with the physical and spiritual degradation of slavery or with the earlier spiritual degradation of idolatry? In fact, the Haggadah begins the telling of the story twice—"Our ancestor was a wandering Aramean..." and, a little later, "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt."

The Haggadah emphasizes the public liberation from Egypt. The rabbis looked at matzah and saw in this simple food many messages about the process of personal liberation from our own private oppressions. What is the difference, they asked, between matzah and hametz—leaven? Hametz, they explained, is a symbol of *yetzer ha-ra*, the human inclination towards destruction, particularly excessive pride. The careful inspection for hametz in the home should remind us to examine our inner selves with equal care. The hametz is sought out by candlelight on the night before Passover. "The human soul is the lamp of God, searching all the innermost parts" (Proverbs 20:27). We carry a light from the Holy One within—and examine ourselves in its light. After having made a thorough search, we declare all the undiscovered hametz to be "null and void." Now we know very well that the undiscovered crumbs are still there; they are not transformed by our words. Our ritual declaration serves to separate us from them—they have no power over us. Similarly, the hametz within, which we never completely eradicate, can lose its power over us.

What about matzah? At the beginning of the Seder, we declare "*Ha lachma anya*—This is the bread of affliction..." Later in the Seder, we explain the matzah as a reminder of the bread which our ancestors did not have time to bake before leaving—a token of their free-

dom. Is matzah the symbol of slavery—which our ancestors ate in the Land of Egypt—or the symbol of liberation from slavery?

The answer is both. (Are you surprised?) Matzah, bread of affliction, is also the afikomen, promise of redemption. Matzah's surface, rough and pock-marked, absorbs blows but does not break. Matzah is the same physically before and after liberation—its significance comes from how we conceive of it. Michael Strassfeld explains: "Matzah is watched [when it is being made] to prevent its contamination with the yeast of pride, the lust for riches, or the thirst for praise. The water is allowed to puff matzah up artificially, to make it appear to be more than what it naturally is. Simple, plain, and flat, matzah is the eternal symbol of freedom—for freedom lies in intoxication with the idea, not with the self."

Best wishes for a liberating and joyous Passover season.

—Rabbi Yoel Kahn

## Membership Potluck

All members of the congregation are cordially invited to a potluck honoring new members on Sunday, April 24, from 4 to 7 pm. This is a great way to get to know each other and to learn about synagogue committees and projects in an informal, relaxed setting. Please RSVP to Ann Biderman at 648-5526 by April 20 for location and details of what potluck dishes to bring.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

## Birthdays

- 2 Victoria B.
- 4 Peter Vishniac
- 6 Roberta Weber
- 7 Judy Macks
- 7 Gordon Osser
- 12 Peter Abinanti
- 12 Gershon Lieberman
- 12 Terry Rothchild
- 13 Marilyn Braiger
- 13 Jay Cohen
- 14 Lyssa Friedman
- 14 Steven Kassirer
- 15 Luana Willis
- 16 Glenn Brian Stoller
- 18 Ethan Inlander
- 19 Alita Rosenfeld
- 20 Bill Ashley-Dobbin
- 20 Lennie Brill
- 20 Aaron Nacamulli
- 22 Sandra Blair
- 22 Barak Gale
- 23 Eli Weinstein
- 25 Brian Ellis
- 25 Louise Montgomery
- 26 Sarah Comerchero
- 27 Nanci Stern
- 28 Bob Berkowitz
- 29 Shirley Liberman
- 30 Henry Mach

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## David's Story

Like many things these days, it began in Los Angeles, specifically at the workshop on gay/lesbian/Jewish issues at the 1985 UAHC Biennial.

The workshop began at 8 am, but David came late and sat in the last row. Being there at all was a major step for the young cantor from Seattle, who was convinced that if anyone recognized him, he'd be fired. But he had reached a point in his life when he could no longer remain in the closet. He loved being a cantor, but perhaps the price was too high.

As the session continued, David's palms stopped sweating and he began to relax. Lesbians and gay men were actually speaking publicly about their lives, their attempts to reconcile Jewishness and homosexuality, their struggle to live openly. When the session was over, David sought out the panelists. For the first time he found himself talking to gay Jews who had come out of the closet.

"I love being in the synagogue on Shabbat," he told them. "It is the most important day of the week for me. But how can I sing with the joy I should feel, when I have to leave my lover at home? What would the rabbi say, the temple president, the board, if I brought Michael with me? I know what they'd say—goodbye and good luck!" So David had made plans to move to San Francisco and to give up the profession he loved. Perhaps he would go back to school, or go into business.

Three years have passed since that biennial, but David did not come to San

Francisco. Instead, inspired by the people he met at the workshop, he summoned the courage to come out, first to his rabbi, then to the synagogue president, then to the whole congregation. To his amazement, the world did not end. Almost without exception, members of the congregation greeted his announcement with support and love. As a gesture of solidarity, his rabbi joined the gay outreach congregation in Seattle, Congregation Tikvah Chadasha. (David had joined a few months earlier.) Lesbians and gay men were made to feel welcome in David's mainstream congregation, and a number became members. No one resigned. And Michael began to attend services on Shabbat and the holidays.

In February of this year, the congregation held its own workshop entitled "Lesbian, Gay, and Jewish: Current Issues and Expressions," and I was invited to Seattle to speak about Sha'ar Zahav.

The workshop was to be held on Sunday, but David and Michael wanted me to meet some of their friends beforehand, so we got together Saturday night at a restaurant on Capitol Hill, Seattle's Castro.

Afterwards they took me on a tour of Seattle nightlife, beginning at a coffee house, Matzah Mama's, where David's rabbi plays a mean bass in his klezmer band, the "Mazeltones." The remainder of the tour is beyond the purview of this article.

When the workshop began on Sunday, the sanctuary was filled with more

than a hundred people. I spoke about "a year in the life of Sha'ar Zahav," then attempted to answer the questions we're asked most often. Is homosexuality a choice, and if so why did you choose it; and if not, what is it? How do we understand the Torah's prohibition of male homosexuality? Do we have children, and if so, how? Why do we want or need separate synagogues? What do we expect of the mainstream congregations? If we don't have children, who will say Kaddish for us?

The response was wonderful. They were entranced with the slides, especially those of the children, and of Tashlich under the Golden Gate Bridge. I read some passages from our liturgy ("With David and Jonathan, with Ruth and Naomi we will remember you"), and they found the passages as moving as I do. Bless those who wrote them—do they realize how much it affects those hearing it, for the first and the 20th time?

Then the panelists spoke. The president of Tikvah Chadasha talked about her congregation, and about her work as a therapist with gay people. A leader in Kadima spoke of coming out to her family; and a member of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays told her own coming out story, as the mother of a gay man.

"Honey, of course we still love you, but do you think you might try Masters and Johnson?"

"No, Mom, I'm fine the way I am."

"I know, honey, but what will you do

*(Continued on page 8)*

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## Va'ad Report

The Va'ad met on Monday, March 14. President Richard Inlander called the meeting to order, asking those of us present to "check in" by stating briefly our personal goals for the evening. In his *D'var Torah*, Rabbi Yoel Kahn spoke on the linkage between Jewish life-cycle events and God, Torah and Israel, suggesting that we view our work for the synagogue as similarly linked. He referred to the blessing said upon seeing great leaders: "*Blessed are You, O God, our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who shares of the divine glory with human beings.*"

Rabbi Kahn reported that Rabbi Janet Marder will deliver a sermon at Friday night services on April 29. After services, candidates running for positions on Sha'ar Zahav's board will be present to answer questions. Candidates' Night will be an opportunity for members to consider the issues and candidates in this year's election.

Richard welcomed Ann Biderman to her first Va'ad meeting. Ann described two upcoming Women's Havurah events: a theater party at Theatre Rhinoceros April 10, and a havdalah service and potluck May 7. Ann received applause and appreciation from the board for stepping forward and volunteering to plan Women's Havurah events.

The Va'ad unanimously approved Richard's written motion to establish a Cemetery Committee to investigate possibilities for creating a congregational cemetery. Irene Ogus, Paul Cohen and Richard will serve on the Cemetery Committee, which will make recommendations to the Va'ad.

Robin Leonard reported for Merry Luskin, Sha'ar Zahav's new Membership Committee chair. Invitations to upcoming events for new members will be extended to the entire congregation in addition to board members, the Rabbi and the new members, of course. (See related article for details.)

Andy Zimmerman presented the recommendations of the Cookbook Marketing Committee. Based on the success of the first printing, he requested the Va'ad approve reprinting the Sha'ar Zahav cookbook. Andy described marketing plans, printing cost estimates and related facts. After further consideration, the Va'ad will make a final decision on the Cookbook Marketing Committee's recommendations.

Richard invited Don Albert to present the written report of the Children's Education Committee to the Va'ad. Don began by introducing Ida Kuluk, one of the CSZ members who served on the committee. Don described how the Children's Education Committee conducted research and reached consensus about curriculum, goals, structure, costs and other matters. The committee recommended that the Va'ad approve the creation of a Religious School Committee. The Va'ad took action to allow a bylaw amendment to establish a new standing committee.

As chair of the Finance Committee, Don also presented CSZ's 1988/89 budget. He advised the Va'ad to consider ways to reduce budgeted expenses and increase revenues next year. The budget will be before the Va'ad again for a second reading before approval by the congregation.

The agenda was tough and long, but the meeting evaluation revealed that we got a lot accomplished and felt good about it. We sang *Oseh Shalom* to conclude this constructive meeting.

—Ben Schalit, Recorder

## To Hear Deaf Jews

Members of Temple Emanu-El and individuals from area synagogues have organized a special congregation called Temple Emanu-El Community of the Deaf. The congregation's Advisory Committee includes both deaf and hearing Jews who are aware of the diversity and various needs in the deaf community. The Community of the Deaf provides sign language interpretation and social and educational services to deaf and hearing-impaired Jews throughout the Bay Area.

Among the first services provided by the organization were interpreters for a Martin Luther King Day commemoration and a very successful Purim festival attended by more than 50 deaf individuals and their families. The next event sponsored by the Community of the Deaf will be a celebration of the Passover Seder. (See Bay Area Events.)

Committees for education and social events are now being formed. If you would like more information or would like to participate call Peter Vishniac at 553-8676, Irwin Weiner at 751-2535 or the California Relay Service at (800) 342-5966 TDD.

—Peter Vishniac

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## Notes from the Library

Do Jews have saints? Do Jews have a caste system? Was Marilyn Monroe really Jewish? These questions and others are discussed and illuminated in a fascinating new book entitled *Atlas of the Jewish World*, published by Facts on File, and now available in our library.

A major part of this book concerns our history, with full color maps and pictures that beautifully illustrate the wanderings of the Jews from ancient times up through the Camp David accords. "The Cultural Background" covers topics ranging from ritual art to the Holocaust, while the section entitled "The Jewish World Today" presents a country-by-country look at Judaism and Jewish communities around the world.

In one valuable volume, the editors of *Atlas of the Jewish World* present the rich variety of Jewry and offer an understanding of Jewish experience throughout the world and throughout history.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					14 Nisan <b>Passover</b> No services	15 Passover Seder, 5pm, Lehr's Greenhouse Restaurant, 750 Sutter
16 Counting of Omer (1st Day)	17 Newsletter Comm., 7:30pm, 140 Ord	18 Jewish Life Cycles, 7:45pm	19	20	21 Services, 8:15pm	22 Family/Children's Havurah Passover Program, 4pm
23 Women's Havurah, 6:30pm, Theatre Rhinoceros Ensemble Rehearsal, 4 pm	24 Va'ad Meeting, 6:30pm Election Comm., 7:30pm Newsletter deadline	25 Jewish Life Cycles, 7:45pm	26 Soviet Vigil, 11:30am, Green at Baker Street	27 <b>Yom Hashoah</b> (Holocaust Remembrance) Social Action Comm., 7:30pm	28 Services, 8:15pm, Living with AIDS Cookbook Proceeds Presentation	29
30 Kaiser Brunch, 10:30am Membership Potluck, 4 to 7pm	1 Iyar <b>Rosh Chodesh</b>	2 Jewish Life Cycles, 7:45pm	3 <b>Yom Hazikaron</b>	4 <b>Israeli Independence Day</b> Bikkur Cholim, 7:30pm	5 Services, 8:15pm	6
7 Kaiser Brunch, 10:30am Membership Potluck, 4 to 7pm	8	9 Jewish Life Cycles, 7:45pm	10	11 Ritual Comm., 6:30pm Newsletter Mailing, 11 Grandview Terr., 7:30pm	12 UAHC Nat'l Comm. on AIDS Visit Services, 8:15pm, Rabbi Janet Marder Candidates Night	13 Morning Services, 10:30am Rabbi Marder Luncheon

## Ritual Calendar

**Friday, April 1**

Erev Pesach, First Seder

NO SERVICES AT SHA'AR ZAHAV

**Saturday, April 2**

Congregational Seder

Lehr's Greenhouse, 5 pm

**Friday, April 8**

Last day of Pesach

Garry Koenigsberg

**Friday, April 15**

Parshah Shemini

Rabbi Yoel Kahn & Steve Greenberg

**Friday, April 22**

Parshah Tazria-Metzora

Daniel Chesir, Sermon by Rabbi Yoel

Kahn

The Torah will be read.

**Friday, April 29**

Parshah Aharei Mot

Leslie Bergson, Sermon by Rabbi

Janet Marder

**Saturday, April 30**

Morning Service, 10:30 am

Bill Schlichter

**Friday, May 6**

Parshah Emor

Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 6:30 pm

(First monthly!)

Rabbi Yoel Kahn & Aaron Frankel

Late Service, 8:15 pm

Dana Vinicoff & Lynne Scarper

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**JOBS WANTED:** Skilled and reliable workers for housekeeping, gardening, construction, and janitorial work are available through EMPLEO, a jobs cooperative for Central American refugees. Call 824-3773, Monday to Friday, 9 am to noon. For more information, see the March issue of *The Jewish Gaily Forward*.

**COUNSELING OUR OWN: THE LESBIAN/GAY SUBCULTURE MEETS THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM,** by Charna Kelin, member of Seattle's Congregation Tikvah Chadashah and board member of the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations. Pre-order for \$11.49 (includes shipping) from Consultant Services Northwest, 839 N.E. 96th Street, Seattle, Washington 98115.



## Bay Area Events

Temple Emanu-El Community of the Deaf will host a Passover Seder on Saturday, April 2. The event will begin at 5 pm with an interpreted reading of the Haggadah. The group will then join the rest of the congregation to finish the Passover meal. The Seder will cost \$15.00 per adult and \$7.50 per child under 13. For more information call the Temple office at 751-2535. The deaf can call through the California Relay Service at (800) 342-5966 TDD.

\* \* \*

"Where is Israel at 40?" A seminar featuring Hirsh Goodman of the *Jerusalem Post*, to be held at Temple Emanu-El, Monday, April 18, 4 to 9 pm, \$17.50 (including dinner and materials). Sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council and the Jewish Community Federation (JCF) of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties.

### Social Action

## Sanctuary Bond Fund

This month, Sha'ar Zahav marks the second anniversary of its commitment to sanctuary and support for refugees who have fled violence and persecution in El Salvador, Guatemala and other oppressive regimes. As part of that commitment, Sha'ar Zahav has established a special Sanctuary Bond Fund to provide bail monies to refugees who have been incarcerated by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Because refugees are often held for long periods of time in centers far from access to lawyers, the bail funds enable refugees facing deportation to pursue legal remedies for political asylum in the U.S. To contribute to this special fund, send a check to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, clearly designated for the Sanctuary Bond Fund. Donations are tax-deductible.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

### Anniversaries

- 13 Jane Graeven & Mark Graeven
- 21 Ora Prochovnick & Rena Frantz
- 24 Aaron Frankel & David Nahmod
- 24 Howard Taske & Steffan Powers

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

A one-woman play based on books by Israeli author Amos Oz will be held Wednesday, April 20 at 7:30. The event is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of the Greater East Bay, Berkeley Hillel and the Jewish Student Board at U.C. The play will be at Boalt Hall. Admission is \$5.00 general and \$3.00 seniors and students.

\* \* \*

A Torah scroll that survived the Holocaust will be delivered from Czechoslovakia and reunited with other scrolls now in the Bay Area on Saturday, April 23 at 8 pm. The celebration is sponsored by Camp Tawonga and the Jewish Community Federation. Folk dancing and klezmer music will follow the ceremonies. The event will be held at the San Francisco Jewish Community Center at 3200 California Street. Admission is free.

Michael Lerner, editor of *TIKUN* will speak at the synagogue at 8 pm on May 10. His topic will be: "The future of Israel in light of the Uprising."

### The CSZ Cookbook

## Out of Our Kitchen Closets

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our synagogue office  
as well as through  
your local bookseller.  
Call 861-6932 to order copies.

## David's Story

(Continued from page 5)

with your life? Could you become a monk?"

"Mother—we're Unitarian!"

David's rabbi was next. He described his early discussions with David, and how they educated each other. His support for members of the gay community was obviously sincere.

David and Michael spoke last. What they said wasn't as important as the fact that they were there, sitting on the bima of David's synagogue together. Someone asked if they had considered having a commitment ceremony. They had, and might have one in the future. But if a commitment ceremony is when two people come together in a sacred place to acknowledge their love before God and their community, I think that David and Michael did just that on that Sunday afternoon in February.

There were questions for the panelists at the end, and several people simply stood and talked about their own lives. As they did, David and I looked at each other and grinned, knowing that we were both thinking of a morning less than three years ago when he, too, had decided to affirm his integrity and his dignity as a gay Jew.

There may have been three prouder people in that sanctuary than David and Michael and me—but I doubt it!

—Mike Rankin





## Yahrzeits

- 1 Geraldine Minsk Rankin, mother of Mike Rankin
- 1 Gizella Weiss, grandmother of Wendy Weiss
- 2 (15 Nisan) Berle Glusberg, father of Yoram Gal
- 2 (15 Nisan) Rebecca Glusberg, mother of Yoram Gal
- 2 Ron Gertz, lover of Howard Blechman and member of the congregation
- 2 Kayla B. Given, mother of Laurie Hauer
- 2 Madge E. Moorehead, grandmother of Grace Laurencin
- 4 Rebecca Hilsenrad, grandmother of Marjorie Hilsenrad
- 6 Rebecca Nutes, grandmother of Barry Siegel
- 7 (20 Nisan) Josef Ha-Cohen Chesir, grandfather of Daniel Chesir
- 9 Ward Schlichter, grandfather of Bill Schlichter
- 10 Frank Foster, friend of Jeffrey Serman
- 10 Betty Litowich, grandmother of Michael Lipson
- 10 Esther Polies, aunt of Marjorie Hilsenrad
- 12 Anna Harris, grandmother of Allen Harris
- 14 (27 Nisan) Morris Goldman, grandfather of Jonathan Goldman
- 14 (27 Nisan) Hans Rosenstein, brother of Jerry Rosenstein
- 14 Frank Blazewick, nephew of Joan Blazewick
- 15 Edward Heilbrunn, father of Randy Heilbrunn
- 15 Kiva Hornstein, grandfather of Francie Hornstein
- 21 Lynn Campbell, lover of Cheri Pies
- 23 John Bamberger, father of Jenifer Dahlstrom
- 25 Irving Brill, father of Lennie Brill
- 25 Carol Eberly Frantz, sister-in-law of Rena Frantz
- 25 Gertrude Shulock, grandmother of Cindy Icke
- 27 (10 Iyar) Jenny Andelman Lofchie, grandmother of Sandra Lofchie
- 27 James Howard Tishler, friend of Howard Bobren
- 27 Dora Yoffie, aunt of Stephanie Hannaford

## Barbara Rosenblum

1943-1988

Barbara Rosenblum wrote in her final letter to her friends, dated February 1, 1988, "It was a good life, it was a wonderful life and each of you who reads this is part of the fabric that made it wonderful, whole and meaningful. I go in peace and calm. I shall miss you."

Barbara died gently on Valentine's Day in her home surrounded by her partner Sandy Butler, her sister Ruth and her dearest friend Stan. It was her last achievement in a life filled with achievements.

What follows are her own words as she prepared for her death:

"I have spent my time living a life that is consciously committed to non-denial, to experience all that I must experience in order to be fully aware and fully conscious. To live and to die consciously is what I want. It means being porous, transparent, like a vessel, letting the emotions rise and fall, letting heartbreak come and letting it go, feeling the emotional pain, keeping it all moving, not blocked. It means opening myself to the rapid oscillation or rapid processing of discontinuous emotions, going from states of intense joy and pleasure, to deep sadness and loss, to rage and anger, to peacefulness and then back to agitation and anxiety. It means living all the emotions, all the feelings. Letting them come and go. Not blocking them. There may be a physical tumor in me, one location where all the cells congregate, but I am working very hard to make sure there isn't an emotional tumor in me, a mass that has the power to block the flow of emotions. I have cancer but it is not consuming me. Rather, I am as alive as I can be, my creative juices have never been as electric, my thoughts have never been as clear. With each new status in my illness, my range of choices shrinks but I become deeper and richer, clearer and simpler to myself. 'Tis a gift to be simple, 'tis a gift to be free..."

May her memory be a blessing.

- 29 (12 Iyar) Abe Schorr, father of Cynthia Schorr
- 30 Abraham Kaven, grandfather of Allyce Kimerling
- 30 Jimmy Pearson, friend of Daniel Chesir

## Condolences

We at Congregation Sha'ar Zahav extend our sympathy to the following members who have suffered a recent loss.

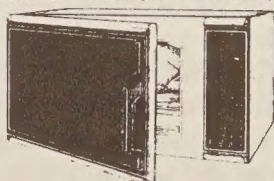
To Sharyn Saslafsky on the recent loss of her friend, Mark Topkin.

## Cookbook Proceeds To AIDS Food Bank

After the April 15 Shabbat services, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav will formally present a check of approximately \$7,000 to the Food Bank of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. On hand to receive the check will be Cary Norsworthy and other representatives from the Food Bank. The check represents a portion of the sales of "Out of Our Kitchen Closets," the congregation's very successful cookbook.

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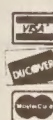
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# So Ask Aunt Yente

Dear Aunt Yente,

The last seder I was at, people gave me a drink of something called shlivovitz that almost took the top of my head off. When I asked why, they told me it was a reminder of the intensity of the experience of the Exodus. But my hagadah doesn't say anything about it. Can Aunt Yente explain?

Befuddled on Beulah

Dear Befuddled,

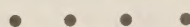
Gladly; at least she will explain as soon as she can get her sheitle off the ceiling (she was doing a little research on her own). Your friends are joking with you; there is no commandment to drink shlivovitz at the seder, and it doesn't symbolize anything much except for trade policies with Yugoslavia and the Jewish love for a good time. But there is such a lovely complicated reason why some drink plum brandy on Peisach, so Aunt Yente will enjoy giving the answer.

The ritual drink for the seder is wine or grape juice; in our tradition, this is considered the most precious, and therefore what we use to celebrate our redemption. It is traditional to drink four cups, to honor four promises God fulfilled at the time of the Exodus: to free us from slavery, to take us out of Egypt, to help us stay free, and to love us as a people. Aunt Yente has been at seders where there is a fifth cup, for bringing us to San Francisco, but she draws the line at reciting "Next Year in Pacific Heights."



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(Actually, at every seder there is a fifth cup, the untasted cup of Elijah; but if Aunt Yente keeps explaining all the symbols of the seder she will never get back to the shlivovitz. And she wants to. But she'll finish the column first.)

So you would think that with all the wine, people would be satisfied? But sometimes they want a little taste something else (especially at seders where the only wine is the traditional sacred cough syrup). So they could have, maybe, a bissle shnapps? Ah, but kinderlach, it is Peisach. We cannot eat (or drink chumetz on Passover; that is, we are forbidden everything made from grain that has become leavened or sour. So most kinds of shnapps—whether it is real Pinch shnapps, or the other naarishkeits like rye or vodka—you cannot drink. They are made from barley, or corn, or other grain that has been fermented—as Aunt Yente's friend Julia would say, this is chumetz *par excellence*.

So fine, you say. If we can drink wine, so why don't we drink a little fermented wine, which is to say brandy—as Aunt Yente's friend Julia would say, a little cognac to lighten the stomach. Ah, but this brings us back to the laws of the sacred cough syrup. Aunt Yente has explained before that we are so afraid people are lurking to slip pork into our wine, that traditionally kosher wine must be handled only by Jews at every step of processing. This is how we wind up with Manischewitz in the first place. So brandy, which is made from wine, is difficult to keep kosher. But shlivovitz is made from plums, not grapes, so it doesn't have the special rules from wine products; and it's not chumetz, because plums are not grain. So every year Yugoslavia sends many of those funny shaped bottles to Jewish communities around the world, and everybody is happy.

But Aunt Yente, you ask, so why can't we drink tequila at the seder? Is cactus chumetz? But you wouldn't ask such a silly question if you had ever tasted Aunt Yente's horseradish margaritas.

So Aunt Yente has enjoyed very much answering your question (although she thinks maybe she will do a little more research), but there is one thing she worries about. The seder is a celebration, and it is good to do things that make it a happy and joyous time, that make us

appreciate how good it is to be free. But it is not only a celebration; this is Peisach, not Purim. It is a time when we remind ourselves that we were hungry in Egypt, and other people are still hungry; that we were slaves in Egypt, and other people still are not free. Aunt Yente will let you have all the shlivovitz you want, if you promise to wake up the morning after the seder not with a hangover, but with a commitment to bring closer the time of redemption for all people.

Happy Peisach, kinderlach!

Aunt Yente

Dear Aunt Yente,

What is all this talk about commitment and redemption?

Confused on Collingwood

Dear Confused,

Come to the seder, and find out. And whether you come or not, so you can make a donation to the shul's maos chitim appeal, to help feed the hungry. When one more person who was hungry can go to sleep with something in their stomach, so redemption is a little closer. If you don't give, you may have an unpleasant surprise at your seder. You will open the door for Elijah to come in, and it will be Aunt Yente and her horseradish margaritas!

Aunt Yente

Aunt Yente loves to receive your questions about Jewish law and ritual matters, and tries to answer as many as she can in her column (but a guarantee she doesn't make.) Just write her c/o the Forward, 220 Danvers Street., San Francisco, CA 94114. All material © 1988 Congregation Sha'ar Zahav.

## Oneg Sponsors

During February onegs were sponsored by the following generous people:

2/5 Bob & Lorraine Nacamulli, & Steven & Florence Nacamulli, in memory of Emilia Nacamulli

All you have to do to sponsor an oneg is to think of the occasion and contact the synagogue office (861-6932). The cost of sponsoring a complete oneg is \$80 or, for partial sponsorship, \$50. You can also provide the food, flowers, etc. for a more personal touch.



## The Greatest Mitzvah

We are all going to die. We all know this, but many of us find it very difficult to think about, let alone talk about. I do not. My first memory of human death was when I was less than five years old. My mother called me in from my playhouse in the back yard and, crying, told me that her Uncle Alfred Lewin had died. I was not sure who or what she meant, and after a moment I asked if I could go out again. She said no, that it was not appropriate, and I should play quietly in my room. I learned that death is sad and makes you cry. Later, Mother was fine, so I learned that we can survive our sorrow and be happy again.

As I grew older I noticed that every few years my parents reviewed their wills, and revised them if necessary. It was clear that this periodic visit to the attorney was not pleasant for them. I learned that the thought of one's own death is sad, but that it is a mitzvah to plan for it because although you hope to live into old age, you never know when you're going to die.

I have always known what my parents wanted done with their bodies when they died. They told me many times that they wanted to be cremated and have their ashes scattered, followed by a simple memorial service. Their feelings were very firm. I learned that I am entitled to have strong feelings and clear wishes about my own death.

During my years as a child I saw that more and more often my parents made condolence calls, and I learned that when a friend has suffered the death of a loved one, it is our duty to offer comfort and support, and, of course, food.

In college I studied the history of music, and I was introduced to opera. Lots of people, good and evil, die in opera. I have learned that ideas about death can be frightening and ugly or inspiring and beautiful.

Of the many women and men I have known and loved in my 44 years, the number of those that remain in my life is small. Some have moved away in one way or another. Many have died. I have learned a lot. And I know that many of you who are reading these words have loved and lost and learned as well.

I believe that we can best serve and honor the memory of those who have

gone before us by sharing what we have learned with our extended family here at Sha'ar Zahav. We can do this in several ways.

We who are members of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav should consider ourselves members of the Bikkur Cholim Committee. The mitzvahs of visiting those who are ill or in distress, of offering assistance such as a ride to shul, to those confined at home, of being sure that every member who is hospitalized is visited, and of bringing joy to the lonely elderly are for each one of us.

We can share what we have learned by remembering that we are all responsible for our own affairs. It is a mitzvah for us to have clear instructions available for our loved ones and physicians in case we become unable to make medical decisions for ourselves. Our loved ones will be eternally grateful if we discuss with them now our wishes regarding funeral arrangements and disposal of our bodies. It is imperative that each of us plan for our death and have a will so that those we leave behind grieving do not have to deal with questions and arguments over property, or other family conflicts.

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav now provides its members a context in which to engage in the mitzvahs of Bikkur Cholim. It has been said that the greatest mitzvah of all is burying someone, because it is the one mitzvah which cannot be repaid. Congregation Sha'ar Zahav is currently studying the options available to us for establishing our own congregational cemetery. I believe that when that is accomplished we will be a truly mature synagogue which fully serves its members in their times of need. It is my great honor to be able to assist in bringing about this goal.

I wish for all of you a very happy Passover and a joyful spring.

—Richard Inlander, President

Carol Fiul, M.A.

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### MEMBERSHIP

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Members of the Congregation receive the *Forward*. For a donation of \$12/year, non-members will receive the *Forward*.

All newsletter copy should be typed, double-spaced and is due no later than the date of the Va'ad meeting. It should be sent to the synagogue office, marked to the attention of the *Forward*. All material is subject to editing; material will not be returned.

Members of the Newsletter Committee are Peter Vishniac (General Editor), Alita Rosenfeld (Production Editor), Bob Goldware (Articles Coordinator), Howard Blechman, Stephanie Hannaford, Garry Koenigsberg, Henry Mach, David Shaber and David Stein (general editorial and production); Amy Blasenheim (photos); Frank Hyman, Alex Ingersoll, Ben Schalit, Sam Thal and Eli Weinstein (distribution). The *Forward* is typeset by David Lester, Pagesetter Typography and printed by Lou Greene.

**Display Ads** are \$15 per column inch for non-members and \$10 per column inch for members, with discounts available for size and frequency. Ads should be camera ready; any ads that require typesetting, camera and/or artwork will be subject to a one-time production charge.

**Classified Ads** are \$5 for up to 20 words, plus \$1 for each 10 additional words. No personals accepted.

Payment must accompany ad and should be sent to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 220 Danvers at Caselli, San Francisco, California 94114, marked attention *Forward* advertising. The advertising deadline is the 10th of the month. The *Forward* reserves the right to reject any ad for reasons of taste. For more information on advertising rates and charges, call Peter Vishniac at 553-8676.



# Congregation Sha'ar Zahav

שַׁעַר זָהָב

220 DANVERS AT CASELLI, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94114

(415) 861-6932

## Rabbi Yoel Kahn

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**Services** are held every Friday evening beginning at 8:15 pm (except as noted), with an Oneg Shabbat following services. Services are generally held on the last Saturday of each month at 10:30 am — check calendar for each month.

### Committee Chairs:

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*Bylaws*, Richard Inlander  
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### Data Managers:

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Jerry Rosenstein

### Office Managers:

Jenny Helbraun  
Jacqueline Letalien

**Office Hours:** M, 9:30–5; Tu, Th, F, 9:30–2; W, 9:30–6.

**Emergency Number:** In an emergency, the Congregation can be contacted outside of office hours by calling 420-9718.

**Congregation Sha'ar Zahav** (Congregation of the Golden Gate) is located in the Upper Market District of San Francisco at 220 Danvers at Caselli, which is one block south of the intersection of 18th & Market streets. By public transport, take MUNI bus 33 Stanyan to 18th & Danvers and walk one block south on Danvers to Caselli.

**Member Union of American Hebrew Congregations** (Mike Rankin, Liaison) and **World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations** (Ora Prochovnick, Liaison).



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## New Members

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that our congregation gained several new members in March. A warm welcome to the latest people to join our family:

Diana, Emma & Aaron Buchbinder

Laurence Cohen

Michael Felson

Joella Hanley

Bobby Harris

Robert Hoffman

Henry Mach

Sally McFadden

New members are welcomed and honored at Friday night services on the last Friday of the month. By making them feel a part of our family, we can all help to show our new members that they have a valuable place at Sha'ar Zahav.